

From: Alan Meyer
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/6/01 9:04pm
Subject: Settlement of the microsoft monopoly case

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing to request that stronger measures be used to curb Microsoft's monopoly power in the software market.

I am a professional computer programmer with no knowledge of law or economics, but with many years of experience in working with Microsoft produced and other software products, and in working with organizations that have chosen to buy Microsoft products.

It is often the case that organizations I have worked for have chosen Microsoft products, not because they thought they were the best, but for fear that significant competitors would be destroyed by Microsoft and that purchasing those competing products would leave them out on a limb in future years.

It also often happens that an organization chooses a Microsoft product because the cost is cheaper than a competitive product. But the low cost may only continue until Microsoft dominates the market. For example, the cost of all word processors and spreadsheets - probably the two most common business applications, has declined for all vendors except Microsoft - which now totally dominates this business and still sells its Microsoft "Office" package at a high price. SQLServer, Microsoft's database, used to be dramatically cheaper than the Oracle database from Oracle Corporation. It is still somewhat cheaper. However as Microsoft's market share has grown, the cost of SQLServer has significantly increased, while the cost of Oracle has decreased.

Both of these outcomes - selling inferior software to buyers who are afraid that competing products' vendors will be driven out of business, and defying the general trend towards lower prices in the software industry - result from Microsoft's monopoly position.

I haven't seen anything in the projected settlement which addresses these issues.

Thank you.

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